



PACHYCEPHALA PECTORALIS, (Vig & Horsf.)

PACHYCEPHALA PECTORALIS, *Vig. and Horsf.*

Banded Thick-head.

Muscicapa pectoralis, Lath. Ind. Orn. Suppl., p. li.—Vieill. 2nde Edit. du Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat., tom. xxi. p. 455, and Ency. Méth., 2nde Part., p. 830.

Orange-breasted Thrush, Lewin, Birds of New Holland, pl. 8.

Pachycephala pectoralis, Vig. and Horsf. in Linn. Trans., vol. xv. p. 239.—Gould, Syn. Birds of Australia, Part III.

————— *striata*, Vig. and Horsf. in Linn. Trans., vol. xv. p. 240, female or young male?

Lanius macularius, Quoy et Gaim., Voy. de l'Astrolabe, p. 257. pl. 31. f. 1, young male?

Rufous-vented Honey-eater, Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. iv. p. 183.

THIS very common species ranges over the whole of the southern portion of the Australian continent, from Swan River on the west to Moreton Bay on the east; but the extent of its range northwards has not yet been strictly determined. During the spring and the earlier months of summer there are few birds that possess a more animated and lively song, which, moreover, is very different from any bird I recollect having heard, either in Australia or Europe, being a loud continuous ringing whistle, frequently terminating in a sharp smack, this latter note being peculiar to most members of the group. In New South Wales and South Australia it is abundantly dispersed over all the thinly-timbered forests, keeping among the leafy branches of the highest trees. I do not myself recollect having met with it in the brushes, while in Western Australia the thick scrubs are said to be its favourite places of resort.

Although it does not migrate it makes a slight change in the situations it frequents, according to the state of the seasons, or the more or less abundant supply of food, which consists of insects of various kinds, caterpillars and berries: like the other members of the group, it creeps and hops about the branches in a gentle and quiet manner.

The sexes, as will be seen in the accompanying illustration, differ very considerably both in the arrangement of their markings and in the general colouring of their plumage, and it is not until the second year that the young males assume the band on the chest and the pure white throat of the adult. The breeding-season commences in August or September, and continues during the three following months. The nest is cup-shaped, and rather a frail structure, being often so slight that the eggs may be descried through the interstices of the fine twigs and fibrous roots of which it is composed. In New South Wales I found the nest is built upon the small horizontal branches of large trees, but at Swan River it is more frequently constructed in shrubs, particularly the *Melaleuca*: the eggs are generally three in number, of an olive tint, with a zone of indistinct spots and blotches at the larger end; they are eleven lines long by eight lines broad.

The male has the throat white, encircled by a broad band of black, which commences at the base of the bill, surrounds the eye, passes down the sides of the neck, and crosses the breast; forehead and crown dark grey, with a small stripe of black down the centre of each feather; the remainder of the upper surface dark grey; wings and tail blackish brown, each feather margined on the outer web with dark grey; sides of the breast and flanks grey; centre of the breast, abdomen, and under tail-coverts orange-brown; irides reddish hazel; bill black; legs and feet olive-black.

The female has the head and all the upper surface brownish grey; wings and tail dark brown, margined on the exterior webs with brownish grey; throat dull white, gradually passing into the tawny buff which covers the whole of the under surface, each feather of the throat and under surface having a narrow stripe of dark brown down the centre; irides blackish brown; bill flesh-brown; corner of the mouth yellow; feet lead-colour.

The Plate represents a male and a female of the natural size.